

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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News Release

March 19, 2008

“Red Wolves” chosen as Arkansas State University Mascot
(Submitted from ASU press release information)



Arkansas State University proudly displays the image of their new mascot: the Red Wolf.
Photo Credit: ASU

On March 6, 2008, Arkansas State University (ASU) revealed the new face of ASU athletics: the Red Wolves. Chancellor Robert L. Potts, announced the decision of the Mascot Selection Steering Committee to a large audience outside the Student Union. The decision to bid farewell to ASU's Indians and Indian Family was begun about a year ago in response to NCAA sanctions.

The Committee gathered ideas for a mascot change from current students, alumni, representatives from student athletics, athletic administration representation, and members of the community. Potts remarked, “The Red Wolf is a noble species of wolf that once inhabited Arkansas and still exists in small numbers in other states. I believe that Red Wolves is the best choice...”

ASU Board of Trustees Chair Mike Gibson said, “Everybody wanted the best, and I feel like...you have come up with the best selection that anybody could find.” Shortly after these comments, and as the meeting broke up, Gibson led the assembled company of ASU administrators and their legal counsel, board members, and members of the media, in a rousing wolf howl, in a satisfactory conclusion of the laborious process.

Gibson and the assembled company weren’t the only ones howling with joy. Kim Wheeler, executive director of the Red Wolf Coalition, a nonprofit conservation group based in eastern North Carolina, wrote the following message to Chancellor Potts: “The Red Wolf Coalition, Inc., and the many supporters of red wolf conservation are thrilled and send their “howling” congratulations to ASU on your choice of the red wolf as your mascot. We consider our red wolf supporters and captive management facilities to be one big family, and we welcome the students, staff, and alumni of Arkansas State University to the family.” Over the last several months, Wheeler responded to many information requests from ASU alumni who supported the red wolf selection rather than the generic “Wolves.”

Bud Fazio, Team Leader, Red Wolf Recovery Program, conveyed congratulations and best wishes from the North Carolina USFWS office and said, “We are pleased to hear of the selection of Red Wolves as ASU's team name and mascot. The noble red wolf occurred as a top predator in ecosystems historically in Arkansas and across the southern and eastern United States. Just as endangered red wolves encapsulate the spirit to fight and survive amidst challenges ahead, we know that same spirit of success will continue in the ASU Red Wolves for years to come.”

ASU’s athletic teams will begin competing as Red Wolves next fall at the beginning of the academic year.